



Public Affairs Division, 1100 Spatz Street, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio 45433-7102
(937) 255-4704 ext 330, 331, 332, 333 <http://www.wpafb.af.mil/museum/>

EXPANSION VISION UNFOLDING

In recent years, the National Museum of the United States Air Force has continued to add historically significant aircraft to its collection and further develop the storyline contained in its galleries. Foreseeing continued growth, officials with the museum and its non-profit partner, the Air Force Museum Foundation, recognized a need for added facilities. Museum officials created a master plan calling for a multi-phase facility expansion and comprehensive gallery realignment to yield a more chronological and cohesive storyline. The foundation developed and launched a capital campaign to generate funds for what became a \$36 million expansion vision. Today, the museum is well down the path to realizing that vision.

In 2003 the first and centerpiece phase of the expansion became reality with the opening of the 200,000 square-foot Eugene W. Kettering Building housing a Cold War Gallery. In 2004 the museum opened the Missile and Space Gallery to exhibit its world-class collection of Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles and satellite boosters, along with elements of its space collection.

Future phases call for a new Space Gallery devoted exclusively to portraying the Air Force's past, present, and future in space, a Presidential Aircraft Interpretive Center to house the museum's one-of-a-kind presidential aircraft fleet, an education center to accommodate the museum's rapidly growing education outreach program, a Collection Management and Conservation facility, along with additional parking. Taken as a whole, this vision confirms that exciting times are unfolding at the Air Force's national museum.

Phases

Eugene W. Kettering Building

Named in honor of the first head of the Air Force Museum Foundation's Board of Trustees, this 200,000 square-foot third building opened in 2003. It houses the Cold War Gallery and features historical and modern aircraft such as an RB-47, the massive B-36, a B-1, an F-117 stealth fighter, an A-10 and the world's only permanent public exhibit of a B-2 stealth bomber. The building is the centerpiece of the museum's expansion.

Missile and Space Gallery

Resembling a missile silo in architectural design, the Missile and Space Gallery eventually will house the museum's ICBM and satellite booster collection. The \$3.2 million gallery stands 140 feet high and contains more than 12,500 square feet. Construction began in December 2002 and finished a year later in December 2003. Featuring an elevated viewing platform, the gallery combines with the Cold War Gallery to tell the story of the U.S. Air Force's contributions in Soviet containment and strategic deterrence during the Cold War. The gallery houses temporarily elements of the museum's space collection until a separate Space Gallery is constructed in coming years.

Space Gallery

Several major artifacts will anchor the USAF space story's historical interpretation in the proposed \$15,000 million, 55,000 square foot climate-controlled gallery. A space shuttle orbiter and a huge Titan IV rocket are planned as the new gallery's centerpieces, illustrating the significant Air Force role in both manned and unmanned space programs. In addition, the gallery will contain Mercury, Gemini, and Apollo spacecraft, as well as a range of other rockets, satellites and booster systems, spanning the history of the space age and exemplifying the Air Force's vast reconnaissance, early warning, communications, and other space capabilities as well as the close ties between the Air Force and NASA in manned spaceflight.

Presidential Aircraft Interpretive Center

Currently, the museum's vaunted presidential aircraft fleet is on display in an auxiliary hangar on a secured portion of Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, adjacent to the main museum complex. Visitors can visit the Presidential Gallery by signing up for a shuttle that goes from the museum complex to the hangar and back. The future construction of an interpretive center will permit the museum to bring the presidential aircraft to the main facility and significantly increase public access to the historic collection, allowing the museum's one million visitors to see aircraft associated with Presidents Franklin D. Roosevelt, Harry Truman, Dwight D. Eisenhower and John F. Kennedy.

Education Center

The museum's education outreach program continues to increase at a dramatic rate, now reaching more than 97,000 students, teachers and adults through more than 1,300 programs a year. This dramatic growth necessitates the future addition of an enlarged education center to help the museum continue to inspire tomorrow's airmen and aerospace advocates.

Collection and Conservation Building

The museum's growth isn't confined just to aircraft; it applies just as much to its artifact collection. Along with nearly 5,000 historical items on display in its galleries, the museum stores over 65,000 additional items in its collection facilities. And that number is growing. The museum plans to construct a Collection Management and Conservation building to better accommodate the increasing number of items and to further enhance its ability to provide appropriate storage capability replete with industry standard security and climate features to preserve and protect the Air Force's historic collection.

Additional Improvements

As the museum anticipates increasing attendance, the institution is moving toward future improvements and expansion to parking areas. When completed, these improvements will make the museum experience even more pleasant for visitors.

Rev May 2006